

REMARKS

Claims 14-26 were previously pending in the application. By the Amendment, Claims 14 and 17 are currently amended, Claims 18 and 21 are canceled without prejudice and Claims 15, 16, 19, 20 and 22-26 remain unchanged.

In the current Official Action, the disclosure is under objection due to the arrangement of the specification. By the present amendment, the arrangement of the specification has been amended in a manner suggested by the Examiner. Further, the disclosure is under objection based on informalities identified on pages 1, 2, 4 and 5 wherein claim numbers are referenced. Such references to claim numbers have been deleted and it is respectfully requested that the objections to the disclosure be withdrawn.

The drawings are also under objection by the present Official Action. More specifically, the striker is “lowered by a link mechanism” as recited in claim 21. It is indicated that the link mechanism must be shown in the drawing or the features cancelled from the claims. By the present amendment, the features have been cancelled in claim 21 and it is herein respectfully requested that the objection to the drawings be withdrawn.

The claims stand rejected under 35 USC § 112, second paragraph. More specifically, claims 21 and 24-26 are rejected as being assertedly indefinite. In claim 21 the structure of “link mechanism” recited in the claim is assertedly not clear. Claim 24, line 5 recites an electrical switch which is also recited in line 9, which is also asserted to be not clear.

By the present amendment, claim 21 has been deleted. It is therefore respectfully requested that the outstanding rejection of claim 21 be withdrawn. Claim 24 has not been amended and it is herein asserted that the claim is not indefinite. It should be clear from the claim language that the first electrical switch is associated with the switching device which is one of a selected two devices that actuate the electrical load. The other device is an openable door element which also includes a switching device. There are electrical switches associated with each switching device and therefore the claim should not be considered indefinite. It is therefore respectfully requested that the outstanding rejections of claims 21 and 24-26 under 35 USC § 112, second paragraph be withdrawn.

Substantively, the claims stand rejected under the cited prior art of record. Specifically, Claims 14, 15 and 18-23 were rejected under 35 USC §102(b) as being anticipated by US Patent No. 1,077,877 to Fitch (Fitch '877). Claims 14, 15 and 17-21 were rejected under 35 USC §102(b) as being anticipated by German Patent No. DE 32 22 056 to Schneider (Schneider DE '056). Claim 16 stands rejected under 35 USC §103(a) as being unpatentable over Schneider DE '056 in view of German Patent No. DE 43 09 132 to Michael (Michael DE '132). Claims 24-26 were rejected under 35 USC §103(a) as being unpatentable over Admitted Prior Art in view of Fitch '077.

Independent Claim 1 recites a switching device including a movable switching element and an electrical switch in selective operative connection to the switching element, the switching element being operable to selectively separate the operative connection between the switching element and the electrical switch. The switching element is movable in a reciprocating manner along a path with the switching element in operative connection with the electrical

switch and movable in a reciprocating manner along the path with the switching element remaining out of operative contact with the electrical switch.

Independent claim 19 recites an arrangement for detecting at least two different positions of a movable door element. The arrangement includes a switching device with a movable switching element and an electrical switch in operative connection to the switching element. The switching element is operable to selectively separate the operative connection between the switching element and the electrical switch. The door element and the switching device have an operative connection therebetween and the operative connection between the door element and the switching device is selectively separable.

Independent claim 24 recites a household appliance including at least one electrical load in the form of a selected one of an electrical interior light and an electrical load that is not an electrical interior light. The at least one electrical load is actuatable by a selected one of a (1) switching device having a movable switching element and an electrical switch in operative connection to the switching element with the switching element being operable to selectively separate the operative connection between the switching element and the electrical switch and (2) an openable door element arrangement including a switching device having a movable switching element and an electrical switch in operative connection to the switching element with the switching element being operable to selectively separate the operative connection between the switching element and the electrical switch. The door element and the switching device have an operative connection therebetween and the operative connection between the door element and the switching device is selectively separable.

Fitch '877 relates to a circuit-closing device for use in connection with doors and is so arranged that the lights may be turned on when the door is open

or closed as selected by a user (p.1, lines 16-21). As seen in Figure 3 of the drawings, a push rod is held retracted under tension of a spring in an inoperative position when the electrical writing is connected to the terminals T but in an operative position in the event the wiring is connected to the terminals W when the conditions are reversed (p.1, lines 91-98). The Fitch '877 device allows a user to connect the control wires for the lighting to terminals T in one case and, terminals W in the other case depending on whether the light should come on or go off whenever the door is open or closed. As illustrated in figure 1, the lighting wiring T is connected to terminals T such that the connection is complete and the lighting is on when the push rod is extended. With reference to Figures 1-3, when the plate C comes in contact with the projecting end of the push rod and overcomes the tension of the coil spring S, as the door is closed, the slide R will fall by gravity within the slot in which it is mounted and come in contact with the head of the push rod, thus leaving the apparatus in condition to operate when the door is opened. As the door is opened, the spring will throw the push rod out and the plate in coming in contact with the terminals T will cause the lamp to be lighted. The closing of the door will cause the circuit to break by the inner thrust of the push rod breaking the circuit (p. 1, lines 100-112; p. 2, line 1).

Assuming the door is closed and the plate R is at its lowest throw and it should be desired to cause the lamp to be lighted without opening the door, the operator by manipulating the lever E may cause the shaft D to rock and the plate C to be raised into position shown on the dotted lines in Figure 2, which allows the coil spring to throw the push rod out so that plate N will contact with the terminals T thus closing the circuit. After plate C is raised it will allow the push rod to be thrown out, it will be held at a raised position by the rod and, when the door is opened, the plate C will go to the position shown in the solid lines in Figure 2 in readiness to cause the push rod to be thrown in when the door is again closed and which will break the circuit. Should it be desired to reverse

conditions, causing the light to be turned on when the push rod is forced into the position shown in figure 1, it may be done by connecting the wires to terminal W (p.2, lines 1-30).

Fitch '877 is concerned with providing a light switch automatable by a door moving between an open and closed position. This switch is configured so that depending on the wiring chosen, the light can illuminate when the door is open and remain dark when the door is closed or it can remain dark when the door is open and illuminate when the door is closed. Such an apparatus is substantially different from the apparatus disclosed in the present application and set forth in the amended claims which provides a door-actuable light wherein the switch itself may be disabled while allowing the switch components to remain otherwise operable, i.e. the striker may continue its linear movement when urged without affecting the electrical switch. In this manner, the switch may remain in an automatically operable switch upon opening and closing the door but the electrical circuit itself may be selectively disabled by operation of the switch.

According to the present application, the door contact switch includes a linearly displaceable striker 48 which is held in the first operating position by a spring force. This is illustrated in Figures 2 and 3 (p. 6, lines 16-19). The striker 48 is displaceable against the force of the coil spring which moves a trip cam 34 located on the outer circumference of the striker into action with a switching pin 36 associated with the electrical switch 38 which controls the lighting circuit within the home appliance (p. 6, lines 23-27). The striker 48 can be rotated in a predetermined direction through 90 degrees that will move the trip cams 34 out of a position in which they can contact the electrical switch. Therefore, in each of the two operating positions, the electrical switch remains deactivated since the switching pin 36 is no longer reached by one of the trip cams (p.7, lines 1-4).

Accordingly, the moveable switching element or striker can remain moveable in a reciprocating manner along its linear path while the switching element or trip cam 34 remains out of operative contact with the electrical switch 38. This provides selective operability of the light inside the electrical appliance without interfering with movement of the switching device such that the switching device can remain in automatic use, controlled by the movement of the appliance door.

Schneider DE '056 adds nothing to the teachings of Fitch '877 and there are essentially no structural distinctions between Fitch '877 and Schneider DE '056 at least insofar as the present invention is concerned. As seen in Figure 1 of Schneider '056, linear movement of a push rod 2 will cause an electric blade connector 5 to engage and disengage with an apparent grounding strip 6, thus making or breaking an electrical connection. There is no indication that the electrical connection may be separated from movement of the push rod while maintaining operation of the push rod and maintaining inoperability of the electrical connection. Therefore, it is respectfully asserted that the outstanding rejection of the present invention based on Schneider DE '056 is in error.

Michael DE '132 adds nothing to the disclosure of 056 to overcome the deficiencies of 056 in its applicability tot the present invention. Therefore, dependent claim 16 should be considered allowable over any combination of Schneider DE '056 and Michael DE '132.

The inapplicability of Fitch '877 to the present invention has been demonstrated above and therefore, a combination of Fitch '877 and the Admitted Art would not result in the invention as described in independent claim 24 and subsequent dependent claims 25 and 26.

For these and other reasons, Fitch '077 does not disclose the subject matter defined by independent Claims 14 and 19. Therefore, Claims 14 and 19 are allowable. Claims 15-18 and 20-23 depend from Claims 14 and 19 respectively and are allowable for the same reasons and also because they recite additional patentable subject matter.

For these and other reasons, Schneider DE '056 does not disclose the subject matter defined by independent Claims 14 and 19. Therefore, Claims 14 and 19 are allowable. Claims 15-18 and 20-21 depend from Claims 14 and 19 respectively and are allowable for the same reasons and also because they recite additional patentable subject matter.

For these and other reasons, Schneider DE '046 and Michael DE '132, either alone or in combination, do not teach or suggest the subject matter defined by dependent Claim 16. Therefore, Claim 16 is allowable. Claim 16 also depends from Claim 14 and are allowable for the same reasons and also because they recite additional patentable subject matter.

For these and other reasons, the Admitted Prior Art and Fitch '077, either alone or in combination, do not teach or suggest the subject matter defined by independent Claim 24. Therefore, Claim 24 is allowable. Claims 25-26 depend from Claim 24 and are allowable for the same reasons and also because they recite additional patentable subject matter.

CONCLUSION

In view of the above, entry of the present Amendment and allowance of Claims 14-17, 19-20, and 22-26 are respectfully requested. If the Examiner has any questions regarding this amendment, the Examiner is requested to contact the undersigned. If an extension of time for this paper is required, petition for extension is herewith made.

Respectfully submitted,



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